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## DDT and Lobsters : A Bulletin of the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries

Maine Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries

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September 6, 1946

## DDT AND LOBSTERS

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(A BULLETIN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SEA AND SHORE FISHERIES)  
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The Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries has been greatly concerned by the series of unusually high losses of lobsters being held at various points along the coast. All possible steps have been taken to identify the reasons for these losses as a first step toward their prevention.

At the request of the Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries, the Fish and Wildlife Service has assigned a biologist to collect data and study the nature of the mortality affecting these lobsters. The Fish and Wildlife Service, anxious to cooperate, has also assigned a pathologist from Washington Headquarters for this study.

Some of the symptoms observed in dead and dying lobsters have been duplicated in experiments with DDT being conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service at Boothbay Harbor. Although these experiments are in a preliminary stage and no definite conclusions can be drawn as yet, the effects of small amounts of DDT on lobsters are so similar to those observed in the field that it is felt the lobster fishing industry should be warned at once of the danger of allowing lobsters to come in contact with DDT in any form. One case is known where a small number of lobsters were lost by feeding bait which had been sprayed with DDT to keep away flies.

DDT should not be used around bait barrels, waste fish conveyers, bait houses, or in any other place where bait to be used in feeding lobsters may come in contact with it.

The experiments being conducted at Boothbay Harbor indicate that bait placed in bait boxes where lobsters cannot come in direct contact with it may also be fatal. Do not use DDT on or around bait which is to be used in lobster traps.

It is well known that a variety of factors may cause death to lobsters held in cars, tanks, and pounds. Among these factors are low salinity, low oxygen content, high temperature, and over-crowding. It is not at present established that DDT is responsible for any of the high losses so far observed. It is, however, a possibility being investigated and it is already clear that DDT is highly toxic to lobsters and that every precaution should be taken with regard to its use.

(NOTE TO ALL WARDENS AND DEALERS: Please advise all fishermen of the contents of this bulletin.)